

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL305		
Name of Service:	The Kiddies Day Nursery and Montessori School		
Address of Service:	8 Clonsilla Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D15 PW99		
Name of Registered Provider:	Brigid Lowe		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time		
Date of Inspection:	14/06/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM 19
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8		
Inspection undertaken by:	Elizabeth Finnegan Hayes		
Title:	Early Years Inspector		
Authority to Inspect			
The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).			
Conditions if applicable	Not applicable.		

Description of service

The Kiddies Day Nursery and Montessori School is a privately operated full daycare service located in Dublin 15. The service operates from 7:30-6:15pm Monday to Friday caring for up to 27 children per day. The service is based in a single storey building which has been adapted to suit the needs of the service. The service is comprised of 4 care rooms; Toddler room caring for children aged 1-2years, Playgroup room caring for children aged 2-3years, Jungle room caring for children aged 3-4 years and the Montessori room caring for children aged 3-5 years. A registered school aged service is also operated in the service and an enclosed outdoor area is available to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 8 staff to work in the service; 7 staff including the person in charge work directly with the children in the service. A chef is also employed. The registered provider does not work in the service.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was *announced/unannounced* and focused on the area of *governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities*. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

This inspection was unannounced and focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9; (1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4), Regulation 11; (1), (2), Regulation 19(1)(a), Regulation 23,

Regulation 25; (1), (2)(a)(b), Regulation 26; (1)(a)(b), (4) and Regulation 28. The findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under;
Regulation 19- Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
Regulation 23- Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,
Regulation 25- First aid,
Regulation 26- Fire Safety,

The scope of the inspection included the Toddler room and Playgroup room.

Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment was assessed in relation to all staff and students working in the service and Regulation 11- Staffing Levels was assessed in relation to all children in attendance.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) There was a named person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A review of the roster and conversation with staff showed that the person in charge or the deputy are present on the premises for the duration of the opening hours.

(c) A clear management structure is in place which staff were aware of.

(2) Conversation with management and a review of the roster showed that there are 8 staff currently employed in the service. The files of all staff were reviewed.

(a) Seven written and verified references were available from a past employer in relation to 5 staff members.

(b) Eight written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer in relation to 6 staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for consideration in relation to all 8 staff members.

(d) Police vetting was available in relation to 3 staff who had lived outside of the state for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Evidence was available to show that 7 staff members who worked directly with the children held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(c) There was no evidence to show that a reference from a source other than a past employer had been validated by the registered provider in relation to one staff member.

(d) Evidence was not available to show that police vetting had been considered in relation to one staff member who had lived out of the state for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(c) The written reference was validated by the person in charge on the 16/06/2023. All staff files have been checked to ensure that validated reference, Garda vetting and police vetting where applicable are held on file in respect of all adults working in the service. Staff files will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the necessary documents as required are held on file.

(d) International Police vetting has been secured in respect of the staff member who lived abroad. All staff files have been checked to ensure that validated reference, Garda vetting and police vetting where applicable are held on file in respect of all adults working in the service. Staff files will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the necessary documents as required are held on file.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation in relation to above has been reviewed by the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances under Regulation 9.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. Five staff were caring for 21 children when the inspector arrived in the service at 9:52am. An additional staff member arrived at 12pm in line with the roster.

(2) Ratios were maintained in all care rooms throughout the day. The following was observed;

- Toddler room; One adult was caring for 4 children aged 1-2 years old.
- Playgroup room; One adult was caring for 4 children aged 2-3 years old.
- Jungle room; Two adults were caring for 6 children aged 3-4 years old.
- Montessori room; One adult was caring for 7 children aged 3-5 years old.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs:

- Meals are provided by the service. Staff advised that children are served breakfast between 7:30-9am, morning snack at 10:15am, dinner at 12pm, tea at 3pm and an afternoon snack at 4:30pm.

On the day of inspection children were observed to eat a sandwich and banana for morning snack and chicken korma and rice for dinner. Additional food was provided by the chef for children as required.

- Water was provided to the children in individually labelled beakers which were observed to be refilled by staff as needed. Children were encouraged to drink water while playing in the garden because of the warm weather.
- Staff were knowledgeable of the service sunscreen policy and ensured children had sunscreen applied to them in the morning before engaging in outdoor play. Staff were also observed to set up a picnic blanket in a shady spot in the garden to allow the children to eat lunch outdoors.
- Nappy changing was completed 3 times per day on a schedule and as needed to ensure the comfort of the children.

Physical and Material environment:

- A range of equipment was available in the care rooms and outdoor area allowing the children to engage in a range of play experiences for example water, a mud kitchen with supporting equipment, ride on cars and a seesaw were freely accessible to the children while the care rooms had a range of books, kitchen and shop with real items and drawing equipment which the children were observed to play with.
- Low table and chairs allowed the children to engage comfortably in mealtimes and tabletop activities.
- Low shelving ensured materials and equipment were accessible to the children to encourage spontaneous play.

Supporting Relationships:

- Staff were observed to be kind, caring and playful in their interactions with the children. While in the Toddler room staff in the garden could be heard singing songs with the children and engaging in their games.
- Staff in the playgroup room were knowledgeable of the individual care needs of a child in their care. They discussed the child's strengths, challenges, and supports provided in the service in partnership with the parents.
- Family pictures were displayed in the care rooms which recognised the child's place as part of their family and the service. This supports the child's sense of identity and belonging to the service while also providing the children with a link to home during their time in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The cosy area in the Toddler care room was not appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the children in the room which made it inaccessible and unsafe for use. The area consisted of soft topped bench with cushions on top which was observed to be chest height on the children one of whom was just learning to walk and was unsteady on their feet. The area was not observed to be used by the children at any time during the day. Children need a cosy area which is accessible to them, and which provides a safe place for them to sit and rest as needed.
2. 5 battery operated toys were found to not be working during the inspection. This limits the play value of the toys and prevents the child getting the expected response when playing with the toy.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The soft topped benches have been removed from the Cosy corner and the cushions are left in the area. Children will be encouraged to avail of the cosy corner on a regular basis.
2. The batteries were replaced. A reminder to check the batteries in the toys has been placed on the cleaning schedule for the room.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation in relation to above has been reviewed by the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances under Regulation 19.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The service door was secure on arrival to the service and staff were observed to attend the door to allow access to visitors.
- An internal door which is secured with a thumb lock prevented unauthorised persons accessing the service while also preventing children from leaving the service unsupervised.

- The outdoor area was secure with high walls and a gate which was secured to prevent children leaving the area.
- Waste was secured in an area inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, dispensed soap and dispensed handtowels were available to facilitate adequate handwashing.
- Children were observed to drink from individually labelled beakers.
- Pedal operated bins were used in nappy changing areas for disposal of contaminated items.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were familiar with safe sleep procedures and were observed to physically monitor the children as they slept.
- Room temperatures were recorded daily in the care room and cot room.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed during the inspection.
- Staff were familiar with the procedure for fire evacuation from the building and garden area and the location of the assembly point.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Items were observed to be stored on the window ledge above a cot which was in use at naptime. This posed a risk of injury to the child as the items could be pulled down into the cot or fall injuring the child.

Infection Control:

2. Sleep mats were observed to be stacked together with sheets on them prior to naptime. The sheets had been used the previous day for children to sleep on. This posed a risk of cross contamination.
3. A number of items including books and soft furnishings were observed to be stored in the Toddler nappy changing area. This posed a risk of cross contamination.
4. The nappy changing procedure was observed to not be completed in line with best practice or the service nappy changing policy. The children's hands were not observed to be washed following nappy changing posing a risk of cross infection.
5. A section of linoleum flooring in the Toddler room was torn exposing a section of concrete floor. This prevented adequate cleaning.

Safe Sleep:

- The mattress in one cot was observed to be too small leaving a gap between the mattress and the end of the end posing a risk to the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The items stored on the windowsill have been removed. A new sign has been placed on the sleep room windowsill, reminding staff that these areas are to be kept clear of equipment. A lack of storage has been identified as an issue and two new outdoor storage containers have been purchased.

Infection Control:

- The storage of the sleep mats has been reviewed and an alternative has been identified. The mats are now kept in a large container off the floor. The used sheets will be taken off the sleep mats before the mats are stored away. Each sheet will be kept in the storage box on a shelf, each box is labelled with the child's name.
- A new sign has been placed on the nappy changing area wall, reminding staff that these areas are to be kept clear of equipment. A lack of storage has been identified as an issue and two new outdoor storage containers have been purchased.
- A new sign has been placed on the wall giving step by step instructions as to how a nappy should be changed, as per our Nappy changing policy. The policy will be reviewed at our next staff meeting which is scheduled to take place on 03/08/2023.
- A new floor covering was ordered from a local carpet supplier for 5 rooms/areas (Hallway, Jungle room, Children's toilets, Staff Toilet, Toddler room) of the nursery. The carpet company has been contacted and an installation date has been agreed - a new floor covering will be laid in the Toddler Room by 30/07/2023.

Safe Sleep:

- The cot has been measured and a new mattress has been ordered. The person in charge will check the cot mattress on a regular basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation in relation to above has been reviewed by the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that a person trained in First Aid Response was immediately available to the children at all times during the service opening hours.

(2) A first aid box was stored safely mounted to the wall at adult height in the hallway immediately available and easily accessible to staff if needed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) A record of fire drills was available for review on the day on inspection. The record showed that the fire drills had been completed on a monthly basis with the last recorded fire drill taking place on 14th May 2023.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was maintained in the service. The record showed that the firefighting equipment was last serviced in September 2022 while the smoke alarms were last serviced on 13th February 2023.
- (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency were displayed throughout the service in care rooms and communal areas.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured as a full day care service for up to 27 children. The insurance certificate was valid until 27th March 2024.